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Tax hearings start; but notices in mail

By LYNN ORR

Farmington Hills homeowners may be wondering where their yearly assessment notices are, especially since the Boards of Review of both the Hills and the City of Farmington are meeting this week.

Although Farmington residents received their notices around Feb. 1, the usual mailing time, Robert Roemer, Farmington Hills assessor, and his staff were mailing notices Friday and Saturday after receiving the computerized information from Oakland County.

"We just got back from the county, and we start mailing today," Roemer said Friday morning. The six-week delay can be blamed on the volume, about 16,000 parcels in Farmington Hills, and the switch to a computerized system run by Oakland County, Roemer said.

"The average homeowner will get about a 10 per cent increase," he explained, but assessments changes range from zero to 100 per cent, he added. "Some assessments even went down."

Homeowners who want to discuss the assessments with the Board of Review will have until Thursday, March 17, to call the assessor's office to arrange for an appointment.

"We will hear everybody if they contact us by the 17th," Roemer said, which means the board of review will probably extend the meetings, depending on how many people have to be heard.

IF A HOMEOWNER is out of town this week or doesn't receive his assessment, there isn't much the City can do about it, Roemer said.

"If there's a gross error, it can be corrected, but otherwise they have to see the board of review," he said. "Their power is gone after April 1, by law."

The current schedule indicates that the board will hear about 18 cases, mostly indigents who appear before the board each year to explain their finances, Roemer said.

Although the City of Farmington changed 3,000 assessments, only 20 meetings have been arranged with the board of review, according to Assessor John Sailer.

"It's rather surprising considering the number of changes," Sailer said, adding that homeowners questioning assessment changes must appear before the review board before any appeal can be made to the state tribunal.

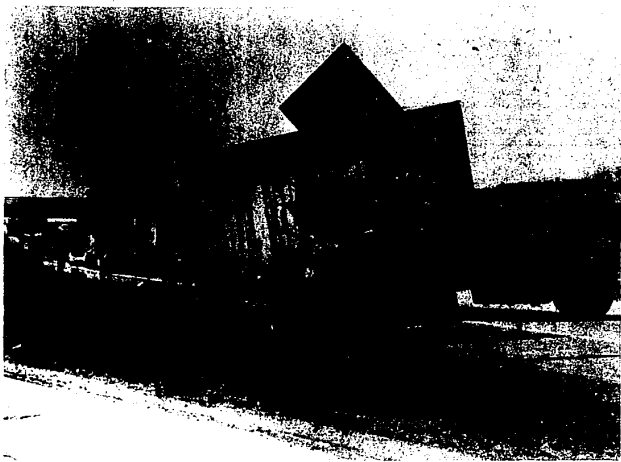
Meetings of both boards will be open to the public, the assessors said. The City of Farmington meets from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1-3 p.m., March 15; and from 2:30-3 p.m. and 7-9 p.m., March 16.

The Farmington Hills Board of Review meets from 9 a.m. to noon and from 2-5 p.m., March 15 and 16; and from 3-9 p.m., March 17.

Appointments are required to appear before the boards and can be arranged by calling the assessors' offices through city switchboards.

Hills residents who have not received an assessment notice can call the assessor's office for individual information on any change.

"We can't afford to send them by registered mail," Roemer said, so the possibility of failure to receive the notice before the March 17 deadline exists, he added.



Line-up
A semi-trailer-truck lost a wheel and jack-knife drivers heading into Detroit. (Staff photo by Harry Maute)

Why TV and boredom plague Farmington youth

By LYNN ORR

"Most of our lives would be edited out of a television series for lack of interest," says Farmington School Board President Anne Struble.

But today's youth, bred on television images, continually absorbs media models who solve problems with ease, tie up the loose ends, and have idyllic family lives.

"Life isn't like that," says Ms. Struble. "It's awfully ho-hum, but kids have to learn that ho-hum is normal."

Ms. Struble's comments on the problems of youth growing up in suburbia were just one aspect of the third seminar in a "Youth Advocacy" series sponsored by Oakland University and Farmington Public Schools Teachers Corps.

The audience of about 40 was drawn to the seminar for various reasons: credit toward their master's degree; an interest in improving their relations with children; and a desire to improve communication between adults and youth who work together in school and at home.

SOCIAL WORKER Virginia Britton agreed with Ms. Struble's comments, emphasizing the impact of television

and the need of teenagers to be instantly gratified.

"Children receive unrealistic expectations from television and think you can solve problems in 30 minutes," she says.

"Arthur Bremer (who attempted to assassinate George Wallace in 1972) got an A on an English theme about a boy named Paul who had a nifty mother strangely resembling Donna Reed."

Ms. Struble believes adults contribute to teenagers' lack of security by enforcing the "someplace else" syndrome.

"When do kids learn to do their own planning without adult organization?" she asks. "When a bunch of kids get together for a party, we find it threatening. We want those teenagers to go 'someplace else,' but nobody says where someplace else is."

"In this community, there's a lack of recreation centers, free of charge and free of adult organization. The community is hostile towards these kids, which breeds hostility in our young people."

Ms. Struble stresses that adult supervision doesn't connote organization.

PANEL MEMBER Anne McDevitt,

a Harrison High School senior, believes the biggest problem confronting today's youth is getting a handle on the future.

"Where is my life leading?" is the question most students are mulling over, says Miss McDevitt. "Do I know my capabilities and my downfalls, and will I be able to accept my weaker points?"

She sees a need for better and more available guidance for students who question what they will do after high school.

Lack of communication was another problem discussed by panel members Ken Barry, Farmington Education Association President, East Junior High Principal Gil Henderson, and Donna Tupper, Farmington Area PTA Council President.

"We're seeing a change in the community structure—and a change in absolute values to relative values," Barry says. "We're using a model that is not doing the job anymore."

He believes that better communication between parents, teachers, and students can improve the situation, a position seconded by Ms. Tupper.

"We should make the worlds of school and home mesh," she says. "School shouldn't be a forbidden

place to enter, and involvement, not interference, can only strengthen our children's lives."

Adults need to communicate their acceptance of youthful behavior, in addition to cultivating a sense of security, says Henderson.

"They need to depend on us for advice, reassurance, and time, and they need to know the family will stay intact," Henderson says.

FARMINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS Supt. Lewis Schulman and Director of Special Education Graham Lewis looked at the question of the problems of youth from another angle.

Schulman sees the large increase in school absenteeism as a result of student pressures in contrast to the view that absenteeism is a sign of disintegration.

"Kids don't have enough to do," Schulman says. "All our budget requests include a substantial increase in extra-curricular activities. The return to the basics we hear so much about is a reaction to the late 1960's and student rebellions," he says.

Schulman believes it's a fallacy, however, to believe that additional programs and unlimited funds can solve problems.

Center offers variety of classes

Classes in arts and crafts cram the Farmington Community Center's spring calendar. All classes unless otherwise designated are taught at the center at 24705 Farmington Rd.

Rae Choma will instruct an antique seminar from 1-3 p.m. Tuesdays, beginning April 19. The five sessions, priced at \$25, will consist of discussions of antique china, silver, art glass, jewelry and primitives, from cigar boxes to shaker chairs.

City beefs up grant program
The City of Farmington City Council has doubled the amount of money originally available to low-income homeowners for home repair grants. This means that some Farmington homeowners who thought their grant applications had been turned down because of a lack of funding now have a second chance this year. Others will have to wait until next year for the money.

Because the grant program was so popular, the city found the \$6,187 originally allocated was rapidly depleted. Last week, it added an additional \$6,000 to the grants fund by transferring money from a fund designated for pay-back home repair loans.

Still, it is not enough and some applicants will have to wait.

Homeowners applied for a total of \$21,115 in grants. Funding this year will fall \$8,228 short.

THERE WAS no problem with the

If you've ever wanted to build a ship in a bottle, your opportunity is scheduled from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Wednesdays, beginning April 20. Instructor Clifford May, a member of the Naval Reserve, will steer you through the four sessions of the class for \$15.

Calligraphy is on tap in three different sessions this spring. Instructor Sue Ebel, a graduate of Madonna College, will teach two beginning courses from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays, or

from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Thursdays, beginning April 20 and 21 respectively. Basics of layout, size and lettering and proper tools will lead into a study of simple Roman and formal Italian styles of lettering in the eight-session courses priced at \$26 plus materials.

Advanced calligraphy and illumination is scheduled from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Thursdays, beginning April 19. The six sessions are priced at \$24 plus materials.

DELORES MOORHEAD, a member of the Michigan and international china painting teachers organizations and World Federation of China Painting, will teach two courses in china painting.

The courses are scheduled from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. or 12:30-3:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning April 20. Each eight-session course is priced at \$35 plus materials.

The very popular Chinese cooking class will once again be taught by Ina Tchen, five-session classes for \$35 including materials. Beginning classes are offered from 1-3 p.m. or 7:30-9:30 p.m. Mondays, beginning April 20. Intermediate classes, usually reserved for beginner graduates, will admit new students if openings are available. Intermediate classes are offered from 1-3 p.m. or 7:30-9:30 p.m. Mondays, beginning May 23.

If you've ever wanted to be a clown, Irwin Romig, Ricky the Clown, will show you how from 4-5:30 p.m. Wednesdays, beginning April 20. The six-session course is priced at \$18.

Creative Cookery without meat, emphasizing nutrition, menus and vegetarian shops, is scheduled from 1-3 p.m. Wednesdays, beginning April 20. The five-session course costs at \$25.

MARY ZDRODOWSKI will instruct a creative stitchery course, scheduled

from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Fridays, beginning April 22. The eight-session course is priced at \$24 plus materials.

A creative writing workshop, from 1-3 p.m. Wednesdays, beginning April 20, will consist of a casual round table setting in which a publishing writer, Iris Jones, will share professional techniques and help students develop their work on an individual basis.

Four courses of crewel embroidery establish the popularity of this spring-time offering. Beginner classes are scheduled from 1-3 p.m. Wednesdays and 7-9 p.m. Thursdays, beginning April 20 and 21. Advanced classes are scheduled from 7-9 p.m. Mondays and 9:30-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays, beginning April 18 and 20. All eight-session classes are priced at \$25 plus materials and will be taught by Zabel Arakelian, a member of the Embroider's Guild of America.

For crochet devotees, Mary Miller will instruct a course from 9:30-11:30 a.m. Thursdays, beginning April 21, with an \$18 price tag on the eight-session course.

To learn how to dress your windows in custom draperies at a fraction of normal costs, a drapery-making course is offered from 1-3 p.m. Mondays, beginning April 4. Barbara Burgess will instruct the 10-session course priced at \$25 plus materials.

ARRANGING FLOWERS for antique holders has a course all its own, taught by Van Ashmun, and scheduled from 12:30-2:30 p.m. Thursdays, beginning April 20. Students will make designs to complement their own antiques in the five-session class, priced at \$22 plus materials.

Farmington anglers get a chance to learn basic fly tying and fly fishing for trout in a special course scheduled

(Continued on page 11)



That'll be five cents, please

Lucy Van Pelt (Terry Sawyer of West Bloomfield), listens with interest as Charlie Brown (Frank Hill of Farmington Hills) lists all the things at which he has failed during a rehearsal of the Farmington Family Players' presentation of "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown." To catch a glimpse of stars in the making, turn to Page 3.

inside

If you like columns...
If you like to read columns, we have a lot to offer in this edition of the Farmington Observer. If you turn to Page 6A, you will be greeted by an entire page of columns written by our staff, plus a column authored by Doug Ross of the Michigan Citizen's lobby.

A la mode	5B
Community Calendar	5B
Editorial Opinion	6A
News	Section A
Sports	Section C
Suburban Life	Section B
Classifieds	Sections C,D